UNITED
NATIONS

DP

Governing Council
of the United Nations
Development Programme

Distr.
LIMITED

DP/1992/SCPM/L.11/Add.8
12 May 1992

Original: ENGLISH

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR
PROGRAMME MATTERS
Thirty-ninth session
4-29 May 1992, Geneva

DRAFT REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME MATTERS ON ITS IN-SESSIONAL MEETING HELD DURING THE THIRTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL, 4-29 MAY 1992

Rapporteur: Mr. Luis ESPADA-PLATET (United States)

Addendum

CHAPTER II

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME MATTERS ON ITS IN-SESSIONAL MEETING HELD DURING THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL, 10-14 FEBRUARY 1992

1. At its 7th meeting on May 1992, the Standing Committee adopted the report of its in-sessional meeting held during the special session of the Governing Council, 10-14 February 1992 (DP/1992/47).

CHAPTER III

FIELD VISITS

2. The report of the UNDP-UNFPA field visit to India (8-14 March 1992) and Bhutan (15-24 March 1992) was presented by the mission leader. Representatives of nine delegations participated in the vist: Algeria, Bolivia, Denmark, Guyana, Mauritania, Nigeria, Netherlands, Norway, and Switzerland.

GE.92-70604/9682a

3. Nine delegations made comments on the report, including four of the mission members. The latter warmly thanked UNDP for its assistance, both at headquarters and in the field, for organizing the visit and for ensuring that it was a most valuable familiarization and learning experience of actual conditions in the field. They also mentioned that it had provided an opportunity for them to discuss at first hand the practical implications of decisions made by the Governing Council as well as a better understanding for formulating future decisions.

4. The main conclusions and practical implications to be drawn from these can be summarized as follows:

(a) Country specificity. UNDP mandates and policy priorities must be adapted to the particular situation and needs of each country and must address the dilemma of conformity with both UNDP and government priorities;

(b) Comparative advantage. UNDP, UNFPA and other United Nations organizations should provide assistance according to their own comparative advantages. In this respect, it was recommended that UNDP should carry out a survey to request all resident representatives to assess the UNDP comparative advantage in their respective countries, in both generic character and actual performance. An integrated approach should also be adopted for the role of United Nations specialized agencies;

(c) Common definitions. Commonly recognized definitions should be adopted within the United Nations system for concepts such as the programme approach and national execution;

(d) Coordination. UNDP should give high priority to its coordination role and to the need for regular meetings both for the exchange of information as well as for more substantive programming. UNDP should also strengthen national capacity in the area of aid coordination. The needs for such assistance in coordination vary greatly according to circumstances in each country;

(e) Field visit to Latin America. A field visit should be scheduled to Latin American countries; the lack of a knowledge of Spanish on the part of some members of the Governing Council should not prevent such a visit from taking place;

(f) Capacity-building. The objective of capacity-building should be fulfilled, particularly in the six areas of focus;

(g) UNFPA advocacy role. The importance of the role of UNFPA was stressed, especially the need for close coordination with the more general development role of UNDP;

(h) Programme approach. The need for early despatch of the guidelines was emphasized.

5. Replies to the above were given by the Resident Representative for India, who indicated that he was pleased that the field visit was successful and that it had been a valuable opportunity for mutual exchange of experience;

6. The Director, Policy Division, Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation, concluded by summarizing the activities under way in the Division to backstop field offices in connection with the above points.

7. The Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA, also commented on the Fund's comparative advantages and on the important complementary role it plays with UNDP, for example in the area of census-taking. He also mentioned the need to incorporate the population dimension into UNDP and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) country programmes.

CHAPTER IV

PROGRAMMING DOCUMENT FOR SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF ADJUSTMENT

8. The Assistant Administrator, BPPE, introduced the programming document (DP/1992/52) which involved an SPR contribution of $1.3 million to complement the $4 million to be provided under the regional programme to initiate a new project entitled "Poverty Alleviation and Macroeconomic Reforms in Africa", instead of proceeding with a second phase to the earlier SDA project. These arrangements had been agreed to in the light of the conclusions of the evaluation of the above project.

9. The objectives of the SPR-funded components are to (a) integrate into the policy dialogue in other regions the results of experience and research in the Africa region and to enable African researchers and policy-makers to benefit from the experience of other regions and (b) to strengthen the capacity of research institutions and policy-makers in developing countries to monitor the social impact of the adjustment process. These objectives will complement those of the poverty alleviation project, which will concentrate on the human development and capacity-building dimensions of the programme at the regional level.

10. Two delegations made comments on the proposal and suggested that further information was required before they could recommend its approval.

11. One delegation considered that the present proposal did not clarify how the new UNDP approach would differ (apart from dropping the statistical element) or even improve upon the current regional approach of the SDA initiative. In particular, it did not address how it would enhance the role of the African countries in SDA. The delegation also questioned whether the current experimental methodology was ready to be applied outside the African region and whether it would really constitute an improvement on that used to date. While welcoming the enhanced role to be given to United Nations specialized agencies, the delegation urged that coordination with the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the international donor community should be maintained. Finally, the delegation recommended that UNDP should reconsider its decision not to continue with a second phase of the SDA project but should rather remain as an active and contributing member of the steering committee.

12. A second delegation expressed a number of concerns: (a) the need to demonstrate clear linkages between national, regional and SPR funds in support of SDA activities; (b) the need to ensure that SPR funds were targeted more specifically towards capacity-building, and that those activities were not left only to country indicative planning figures; (c) the need to address serious management problems highlighted in the evaulation; (d) the need to spell out clearly other aspects of the SDA programme funded from other sources; (e) the need for the design of the Poverty Alleviation to be fully completed before approval of the SPR component and for linkages between them to be clarified; and (f) the need to clarify the proposed administrative arrangements to be established to ensure that project activities were coordinated and integrated.

13. The Standing Committee agreed to revert to this issue following informal consultations.